



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

DESERT LOCUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Danger Level = Serious (Central Region)

14 DECEMBER 2021. FLEDGING STARTS IN NE SOMALIA

OVERVIEW. The fledging of hoppers into immature adults commenced today in northeast Somalia where aerial and ground control operations continue against late instar hopper bands. The operations have been extremely effective in reducing the infestations and delaying fledging by at least one week. In southern Ethiopia, limited aerial control operations continue against a couple of small mature swarms that persist in the Rift Valley of SNNP near the Kenya border. Low numbers of solitary locusts are present in winter breeding areas along both sides of the Red Sea.

WHY IT MATTERS. The current success of control operations in northeast Somalia has undoubtedly limited the number and size of immature swarms that will form in the next two weeks. Nevertheless, a few small swarms from undetected and untreated areas should start to form in the coming week given current temperatures. Since vegetation is drying out and the prevailing winds are from the northeast, the swarms are likely to migrate southwards, passing over central Somalia and eastern Ethiopia to reach southeast Ethiopia, northeast Kenya, and southern Somalia on about 24 December or thereafter. Upon arrival, the swarms should continue further west in Wajir, Marsabit, Samburu, and Turkana counties of Kenya and southern parts of Oromia and SNNP regions in Ethiopia. The threat of swarm arrival in these areas should subside by early January. It will take at least one month for the swarms to mature and be ready to lay eggs. By that time, however, conditions are not likely to be favourable since it will be the dry season. Consequently, the swarms may remain immature until the long rains arrive in April/May, which would allow maturation and egg-laying. Given this scenario, field teams are expected to have the necessary resources, experience, and time to control the swarms before April and bring the current upsurge to an end.

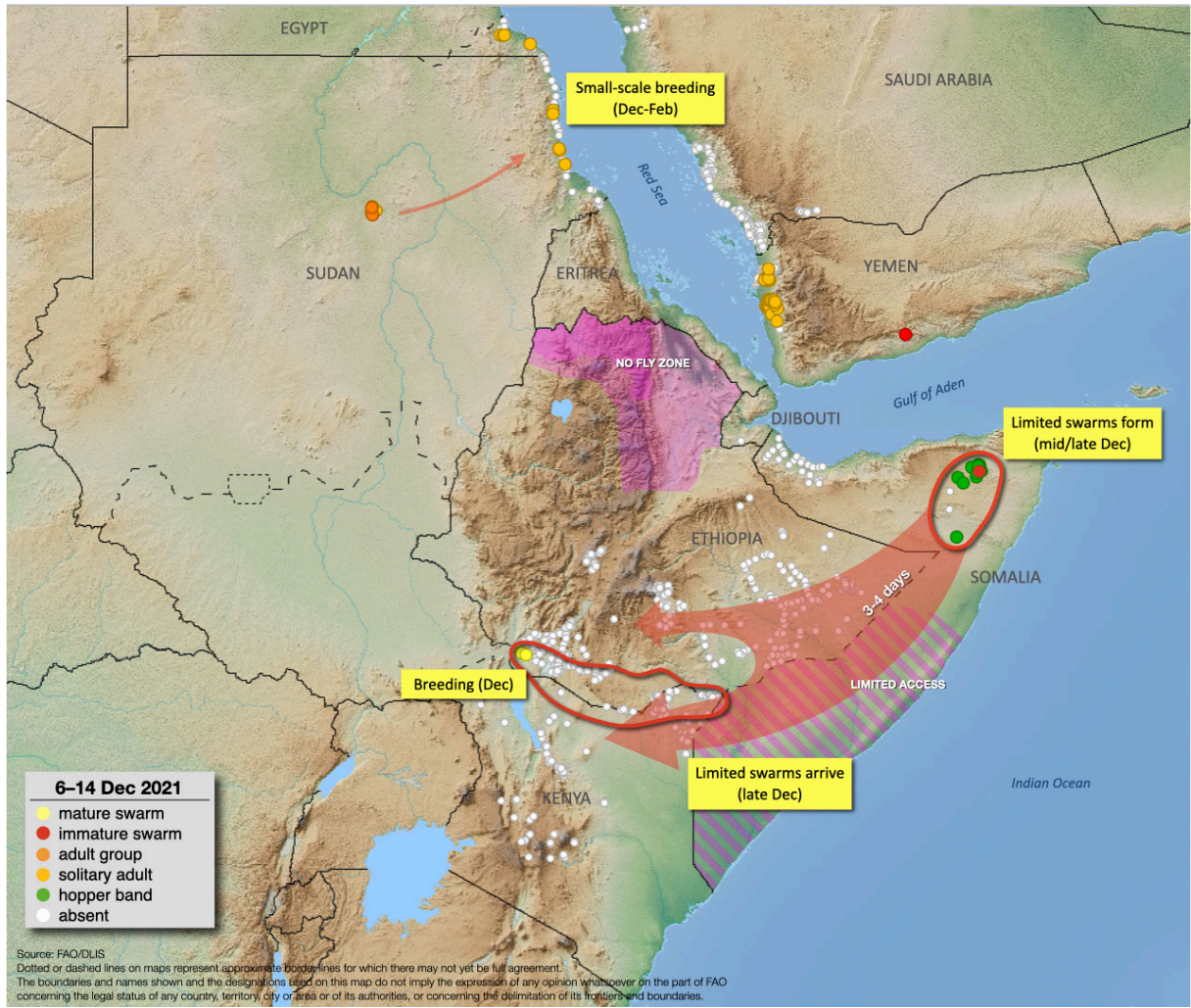
CONTEXT. Two hot spots, in Somali and Ethiopia, remain in the Horn of Africa.

- **SOMALIA.** Control operations continue against small late instar hopper bands in the NE where fledging started today, which will cause a few small immature swarms to form after about a week.
- **ETHIOPIA.** Control continues against a few small mature swarms that persist in the Rift Valley of southern SNNP near the Kenya border.
- **KENYA.** No locusts seen, but limited breeding could be underway along northern border.
- **ERITREA.** Scattered adults on the central Red Sea coast.
- **YEMEN.** Scattered adults on the Red Sea coast.
- **SUDAN.** Infestations declining in the interior; scattered adults on the Red Sea coast.
- **EGYPT.** Scattered adults on the Red Sea coast in the southeast.
- **SAUDI ARABIA.** No locusts on the southern coast of Red Sea but may arrive from nearby Yemen.

TAKEAWAY. Maintain current efforts to reduce swarm formation in the Horn of Africa.

- **Central Region (SERIOUS)** – maintain operations (Ethiopia, Somalia); increase vigilance (N. Kenya)
- **Western Region (CALM)** – no significant activities
- **Eastern Region (CALM)** – no significant activities

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CURRENT SITUATION. Fledging commenced today in NE Somalia where control operations continue against late instar hopper bands. Control also continues against a few small mature swarms remaining in S Ethiopia. Low numbers of adults are present in winter breeding areas along both sides of the Red Sea.